

MISSOURI STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL



2018 | ANNUAL
REPORT

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Note: This annual report for calendar year 2018 covers information and data from Program Year 2017 (July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018).

MISSION STATEMENT

Missouri State Rehabilitation Council

OUR VISION

The Missouri State Rehabilitation Council envisions a society that values all of its members equally and provides opportunities so that all people are able to meet their needs, fulfill their dreams and participate in society.

OUR MISSION

To ensure that persons with disabilities have opportunities to be as productive as possible by advising Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation that services provided to persons with disabilities are:

- of the highest quality.
- consumer directed.
- responsive to consumer choice.
- effective.
- individualized.
- culturally specific and relevant to labor market trends.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

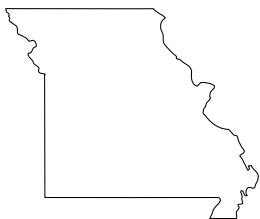
To work in partnership with Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation to achieve positive outcomes for persons with disabilities by:

- providing input on the state plan, policies and practices affecting services to persons with disabilities.
- obtaining and interpreting consumer input.
- identifying corrective action consistent with that input.
- advocating for adequate resources to ensure that the rehabilitation needs of all Missourians are met.
- identifying strategies to address the needs of people who are not being served or who are being underserved.

To support Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation in complying with applicable laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the Rehabilitation Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

(Adopted Nov. 4, 1999)

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



MISSOURI STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

3024 Dupont Circle ■ Jefferson City, Missouri 65109
Phone: 573-751-3251 ■ Fax: 573-751-1441

Tim Tadlock
Gallatin
Chairperson

Bob Hosutt
Nixa
Vice Chairperson

James Ankrom
Smithville

Dennis Atkins
Viburnum

Daniel Cayou
Jefferson City

Judy Heard
St. Louis

Joseph Matovu
Kansas City

Gary Otten
St. Louis

Lori Pace
Rogersville

Mary Stodden
St. Charles

Aimee Wehmeier
St. Louis

Brent Yerian
Jefferson City

Timothy E. Gaines
Jefferson City
Ex Officio Member
VR Assistant Commissioner

December 31, 2018

The Honorable Michael L. Parson
Governor of Missouri
State Capitol
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

Dear Governor Parson:

On behalf of the members of the Missouri State Rehabilitation Council, I am proud to present the Council's annual report for Program Year 2017. In these pages, you will find the progress made by Missouri citizens who were served by vocational rehabilitation programs.

Each Council member has unique experiences in advocating for the rights of our fellow Missourians whose physical or mental disabilities may pose barriers to productive employment. Through our quarterly meetings and committee deliberations, we have given our support to Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation to empower individuals with disabilities and to encourage decisions that lead to greater self-sufficiency.

We have advised Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation on innovative programming to reach the underserved populations in the state and on exploring additional methods of obtaining feedback on services provided.

It has been my great privilege to work with members of the Council as well as with Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation staff, all of whom are dedicated to providing our citizens with the opportunity to make choices in obtaining meaningful employment. Employment is a key to independence.

Sincerely,

Tim Tadlock
Chairperson

STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON



TIM TADLOCK
Gallatin

VR ASSISTANT
COMMISSIONER



TIMOTHY E. GAINES
Jefferson City

EX OFFICIO MEMBER

VICE CHAIRPERSON



BOB HOSUTT
Nixa



JAMES ANKROM
Smithville



DENNIS ATKINS
Viburnum



DANIEL CAYOU
Jefferson City



JUDY HEARD
St. Louis



JOSEPH MATOVU
Kansas City



GARY OTTEN
St. Louis



LORI PACE
Rogersville



MARY STODDEN
St. Charles



AIMEE WEHMEIER
St. Louis



BRENT YERIAN
Jefferson City

COUNCIL'S PURPOSE

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) was first authorized by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended in 1998 (referred to hereafter as the Act). Section 105 of the Act requires the state vocational rehabilitation agency to establish a council.

The SRC was initially formed on June 1, 1993. Members are appointed by the governor and serve no more than two consecutive three-year terms. As required by the Act, SRC members represent the Statewide Independent Living Council; the Parent Training and Information Center; the Client Assistance Program; the Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program; the Office of Special Education, which is the state agency responsible for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; the Missouri Workforce Development Board; community rehabilitation program service providers; disability advocacy groups; current or former applicants/recipients of vocational rehabilitation services; and business, industry and labor.

The SRC is responsible for reviewing, analyzing and advising VR regarding its performance on such issues as eligibility; the extent, scope and effectiveness of services; and any other functions affecting people with disabilities. Full SRC meetings are held quarterly on the first Thursday of February, May, August and November. Subcommittees meet as needed throughout the year.

During Program Year 2017, the SRC was actively involved with VR in the activities below:

MISSOURI	STATE	REHABILITATION	COUNCIL
Attended and participated in VR public hearings to provide input on the combined state plan	Coordinated and participated in presentations and activities with other councils and agencies including the Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the Client Assistance Program, the Statewide Independent Living Council, the Department of Mental Health, the Parent Training and Information Center, Missouri Assistive Technology, the Hearing Loss Association, the Governor's Council on Disability, the Division of Workforce Development, and the Office of Special Education	Reviewed and provided recommendations to VR regarding the combined state plan's comprehensive statewide needs assessment, goals, priorities, performance accountability measures and comprehensive system of personnel development	Provided comments to VR regarding issues pertaining to waiting lists (Order of Selection)
Evaluated and provided recommendations on the effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation services and satisfaction with those services			Reviewed hearing decisions and mediation outcomes
Assisted VR staff in preparing the SRC's annual report for the governor and the commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration on the status of vocational rehabilitation services in Missouri		Provided recommendations to VR on policy revisions and rule changes	Reviewed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and new regulations pertaining to Title IV

MISSION, VISION & PRINCIPLES

Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation

MISSION

Our mission is to provide opportunities and resources to eligible individuals with disabilities leading to successful employment.

VISION

Our vision is to provide everyone with a great VR experience.

OPERATING PRINCIPLES

We will:

- Act with a sense of urgency.
- Provide quality customer service.
- Maximize our resources.
- Do the right thing.
- Put people first.
- Continuously evaluate our practices/processes.



LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR



Timothy E. Gaines
Assistant Commissioner

Office of Adult Learning and
Rehabilitation Services

3024 Dupont Circle • Jefferson City, MO 65109 • dese.mo.gov

December 31, 2018

The Honorable Michael L. Parson
Governor of Missouri
State Capitol
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

Dear Governor Parson:

The annual report presented to you from the Missouri State Rehabilitation Council for Program Year 2017 provides information on the Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation employment program for individuals with disabilities.

Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation has operated under an Order of Selection since October 2003 due to the number of applicants requesting services, rising service costs and limited federal funding. The Rehabilitation Act requires eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities to receive services first. All other eligible individuals receive services as funds become available.

During PY 2017, Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation helped 5,010 individuals reach successful employment outcomes with a success rate of 54.5 percent for individuals who received services and exited the program.

Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation works closely with school districts across the state. The program annually provides transition services, including pre-employment transition services, to approximately 13,000 high school students and youth with disabilities.

Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation grant dollars expended for purchased client services from community vendors are effective and help local economies. In addition, the total annual increase in earnings from application to closure for competitively employed individuals in PY 2017 was over \$60 million. The program's customer satisfaction survey results are consistently among the top in the nation.

In closing, the Council and I offer our sincere appreciation for your personal interest and support in serving people with disabilities.

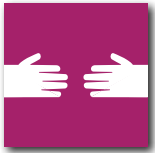
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy E. Gaines". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

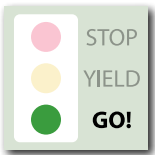
Timothy E. Gaines
Assistant Commissioner
Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services

VR HIGHLIGHTS

Important items from PY 2017 regarding VR's positive impact on the quality of individuals' lives and on communities served:



29,465 individuals worked with VR counselors.



5,010 individuals achieved successful employment outcomes.



1,839 youths reached successful employment outcomes.



1,527 successfully employed individuals received supported employment services.



502 successfully employed individuals received Individual Placement and Support services.



97% of successfully employed individuals had significant disabilities.



\$60,469,916 was the total annual increase in income from application to closure for 4,633 competitively employed individuals.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Prepared on behalf of the SRC, this annual report highlights various programs and services of VR during Program Year 2017 (July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018). With the passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, VR services will now be reported on a federal program year rather than a federal fiscal year.

On Oct. 1, 2003, due to insufficient funds to serve all eligible individuals, VR began operating under an Order of Selection with three priority categories. Eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities are required by law to receive services first (Category 1). Eligible individuals who have less significant disabilities are required to be placed on a waiting list for services (Categories 2 and 3).

During PY 2017, VR counselors worked with more than 29,000 people in various categories with an average daily count greater than 15,000. VR helped 5,010 individuals reach successful employment outcomes.

In PY 2017, more than 54 percent of individuals who received services through VR were successfully employed. This statistic is a percentage of all eligible individuals leaving VR who received services.



Jazmyne Reed (left) worked at the Goodwill retail store in St. Peters as part of the summer work experience program alongside **Ashley Sweet** (right), her MERS Goodwill job coach.

State Funding and the Social Security Reimbursement Program

VR receives state funding from the general revenue fund, the Missouri Lottery and the Department of Mental Health. The match requirement is 21.3 percent state funding and 78.7 percent federal funding.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) reimburses state vocational rehabilitation agencies for the costs of providing services to assist SSA disability recipients in becoming gainfully employed. VR uses Ticket Tracker software to interface with VR's case-management

system. The software matches and identifies individuals receiving SSA disability benefits whom VR helped in reaching their employment goals. Ticket Tracker has streamlined the consumer identification and reimbursement submission process, enabling VR to receive SSA reimbursements in a more timely and efficient manner. In PY 2017, VR received \$1,584,945 in reimbursement claims. A portion of this funding helps support the Centers for Independent Living in Missouri.



During May's SRC meeting, **Wyatt Suling**, policy coordinator with the state treasurer's office, presented on MO ABLE, an investment account for eligible individuals with disabilities.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into federal law in 2014 to strengthen the workforce development system by aligning and improving employment, training and education programs. WIOA makes changes to programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973,

especially the VR program. Areas in which this legislation affects the program include employment for individuals with disabilities, employer relationships, services for youth and students with disabilities, and collaboration with other federal and state agencies and partners.

With regard to VR, the law focuses on providing services to individuals with disabilities, including youth and students with disabilities, to assist them in achieving competitive, integrated employment. VR continues to help individuals with disabilities obtain, maintain, regain and advance in employment. VR is committed to developing new relationships with employers and providing flexible strategies like on-the-job training, internships, apprenticeships and customized employment. VR has worked with other agencies to create a combined state plan that describes how VR and its partners will collaboratively deliver integrated services to Missouri's job seekers, workers and employers under WIOA.



During the August SRC meeting, **Lydia Mitchell**, VR regional manager, presented on joint activities among VR and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act partners.



Meghan Zadell worked at Wentzville City Hall as a participant in the summer work experience program. The city, VR and Easterseals Midwest partnered to provide pre-employment transition services to VR-eligible students.

Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment

VR and the SRC jointly conduct an annual comprehensive statewide assessment of the rehabilitation needs of Missourians. The conclusions and recommendations of the assessment are incorporated into VR's goals and priorities for the purpose of improving services.

VR uses many methods to collect information for the assessment including customer satisfaction surveys, public hearings, VR strategic teams, SRC input, VR case data and national census statistics.

Two areas that the assessment specifically focuses on are the needs of individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals from populations that have been traditionally unserved or underserved by vocational rehabilitation programs. The PY 2017 needs assessment identified the minority populations of Hispanics and African-Americans, along with individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI), as underserved. Figure 1 (page 12) reflects the closure percentages by ethnicity for PY 2017.

VR remains committed to improving services for underserved populations, increasing their employment outcomes and reducing the number of individuals from these populations who drop out prior to receiving services. One of VR's goals is

to increase competitive, integrated employment outcomes for individuals with ASD.

VR utilizes the following strategies to address these areas of need:

- VR employs a part-time diversity consultant to assist with improving services to underserved areas, developing training programs and establishing outreach strategies for individuals from diverse cultures.
- The Cultural Diversity Team (composed of community rehabilitation program staff, the diversity consultant, and VR management and district office staff) meets throughout the year to develop strategies for serving individuals from diverse cultures.
- VR provides employees with training opportunities on cultural competency that cover aspects of diversity.
- VR has appointed an autism services liaison to serve as a resource for its staff throughout the state. This liaison works with providers on strategies for better serving individuals with ASD.
- VR has developed Employment Services Plus, which is designed to assist individuals with ASD, TBI or cultural deafness/hearing loss who require additional supports to reach successful employment outcomes.

The assessment also addresses the necessities of youth and students with disabilities including their need for pre-employment or other transition services. Another of VR's goals is to increase the number of employment outcomes for youth with disabilities. For strategy information on this area of need, see page 15.



Kyle Aubuchon, Boards and Commissions director for the office of Gov. Michael Parson, gave an update on SRC appointments and reappointments at the August meeting.

Closure Percentages by Ethnicity – PY 17

STATUS	WHITE	AFRICAN-AMERICAN	OTHER
5,010 successful employment outcomes	75%	21%	4%
4,186 closed unsuccessfully after services	69%	27%	4%
4,387 closed after eligibility before services	72%	22%	6%

Figure 1

PARTNERING

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Partners

WIOA requires the alignment of core programs in order to provide coordinated and streamlined services. These core programs are VR; Rehabilitation Services for the Blind; Adult Education and Literacy programs; Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs; Wagner-Peyser Employment Services; and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families programs. Teams composed of representatives from WIOA core partner programs, as well as other partner organizations, have been formed to develop strategies for serving mutual clients. These teams have identified focus areas, such as best practices and agency cross-trainings, that can be shared statewide and at the local level. All program partners strive to improve the workforce system and services to job seekers, employees and employers.



At the May SRC meeting, **Kim Gee** (left photo), VR assistant field operations manager, presented on pre-employment transition services. **Adonis Brown**, executive director of the Missouri Statewide Independent Living Council, and his wife, **Clementine** (right photo), were in attendance.

VR collaborates, coordinates and cooperates with partner programs to ensure that individuals with disabilities benefit from seamless access to career services, education and training. VR also participates in business services teams within the workforce system to better serve employers' needs. VR offers a dual-customer approach by supporting its job candidates and businesses in order to achieve successful outcomes for both.

Centers for Independent Living

Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are community-based nonresidential programs designed to promote independent living for people with disabilities. In Missouri, there are 22 CILs that offer independent living services. The CILs are funded through federal and state independent living grants and are managed by local boards composed of individuals with disabilities who have been successful in establishing their own independent lifestyles. VR and the CILs work together on a regular basis to share referrals and provide services to mutual clientele. A number of CILs have VR district office staff as active board members. VR and the CILs have developed a summer work experience program to provide pre-employment transition services. The CILs offer potentially VR-eligible students access to job exploration activities, workplace-readiness training, social support and instruction on self-advocacy (including peer mentoring). Last summer, 12 CILs were involved in the program and worked with 90 students.

Department of Mental Health

The Department of Mental Health's (DMH) Divisions of Behavioral Health (DBH) and Developmental Disabilities (DD) have been longstanding partners with VR in assisting eligible individuals seeking vocational rehabilitation services to gain employment. Partnership activities include the funding of DB101, a customized Missouri benefits-planning website. Cross-system collaboration remains ongoing through system change initiatives, grant and technical support opportunities, and local/regional trainings. VR has appointed a DMH liaison, and DMH has representation on WIOA teams consisting of core partner programs and other partner agencies.

A recent reorganization of DD service providers, updated regulations for home and community-based services that impact Medicaid waiver services, and WIOA implementation are central to current activities and planning for DMH-DD and VR staff. Regional agency cross-trainings are being developed to communicate these evolving changes, which support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

In partnership with DBH, Individual Placement and Support (IPS), an evidence-based supported employment service for adults with serious mental illness, has been a focus. IPS requires close program and clinical relationships between local mental health and vocational rehabilitation staff to ensure success.

VR is collaborating with DMH and the Departments of Economic Development and Social Services in implementing the Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program. This program operates on the foundation that community-based, integrated employment should be the first priority for employment-related services for youth and adults with significant disabilities. Publicly funded systems are urged to align policies, regulations and funding priorities to promote community inclusion and the employment of individuals with disabilities in integrated settings earning at or above the minimum wage.

Community Rehabilitation Programs

VR and community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) collaboratively work with an outcome-based service model that emphasizes quality employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. CRPs are nonprofit organizations accredited by recognized professional associations that have developed commonly accepted processes for evaluating employment-related services. All independently owned and operated, CRPs provide services that may include vocational planning, job development and placement services, skills training, specialized employment services, supported employment, and transition services.

Multiple ad hoc teams composed of VR and CRP staff have worked together to develop and design new processes. VR and its CRP partners have implemented several projects to improve services. During summer 2018, a six-week work experience program for students with disabilities was held. Twenty-eight CRPs and 700 VR-eligible students participated. Collaboration and partnership are cornerstones of the relationship between VR and CRPs and have fostered an environment of creativity and innovation. The VR-CRP steering committee meets regularly to review progress on their organizations' joint projects and on service delivery.



Trenton Miller (center), a student at Clearwater High School, worked at Sam A. Baker State Park as part of the summer work experience program. VR partnered with the school, park and MERS Goodwill in Poplar Bluff to provide the experience. Also pictured: **James West** (left), MERS Goodwill job coach, and **Donna Brooks** (right), MERS Goodwill job coach supervisor.



Maneka Boxdorfer worked at Schnucks in Arnold as part of the summer work experience program provided by VR, the store and NextStep for Life.

Missouri Reentry Process

VR participates in the Missouri Reentry Process, which encourages collaboration among government and local agencies to improve the transition of offenders leaving prison and returning to local communities and work. State government agencies are the Departments of Corrections, Economic Development, Elementary and Secondary Education, Health and Senior Services, Mental Health, Public Safety, Revenue, Social Services, Transportation, and the Office of the State Courts Administrator. Other partnering agencies include the federal probation system along with local law enforcement, faith-based organizations, service providers and treatment programs.

In addition, VR is participating in a pilot program with the Department of Corrections in southern Missouri. VR is providing career counseling and coordinating services with other agencies for six-month pre-release offenders with disabilities to assist them with finding employment and returning to their communities.

VR SERVICES

Transition Services

WIOA places a significant emphasis on services to youth and students. The law's intent is to ensure that young individuals with disabilities are better prepared and have more opportunities for competitive, integrated employment. WIOA requires that VR (in collaboration with local education agencies) provide pre-employment transition services to eligible or potentially eligible students 16 to 21. These services include job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs, workplace-readiness training, and instruction in self-advocacy (including peer mentoring).

VR has helped to develop and implement innovative programs to provide pre-employment transition services. VR also has established partnerships with the University of Missouri's College of Education, CILs, CRPs, businesses and local school districts. With its partners, VR is working to expand pre-employment transition services to all parts of the state.

VR provides youth with disabilities ages 14 to 24 a variety of other transition services such as job placement, supported employment, training and rehabilitation technology. A team of professionals from VR, local school districts and other agencies has been assembled to offer support and technical assistance on these services.



VR partnered with Fredericktown High School, Country Mart and MERS Goodwill in Farmington to provide a summer work experience program for VR-eligible students. From left to right: participants **Samuel St. Clair**, **McKenzie Lewis**, **Daniel Johnson** and **Dalton Edmond**.

Supported Employment Disability Categories of Those Served — PY 17

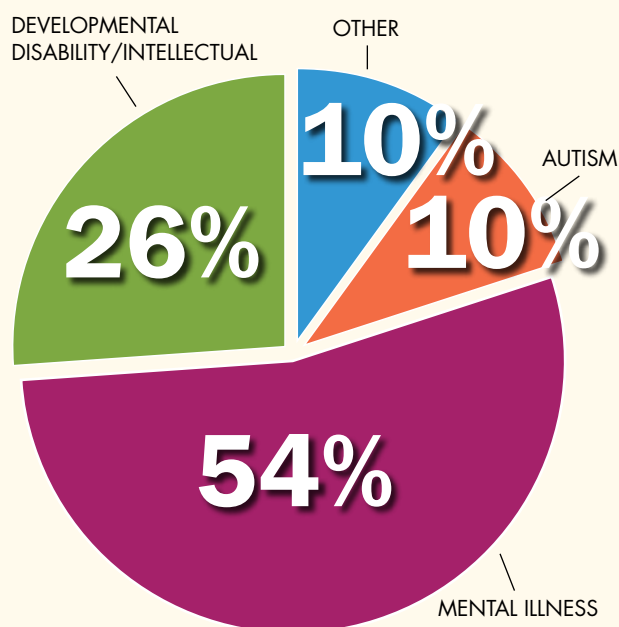


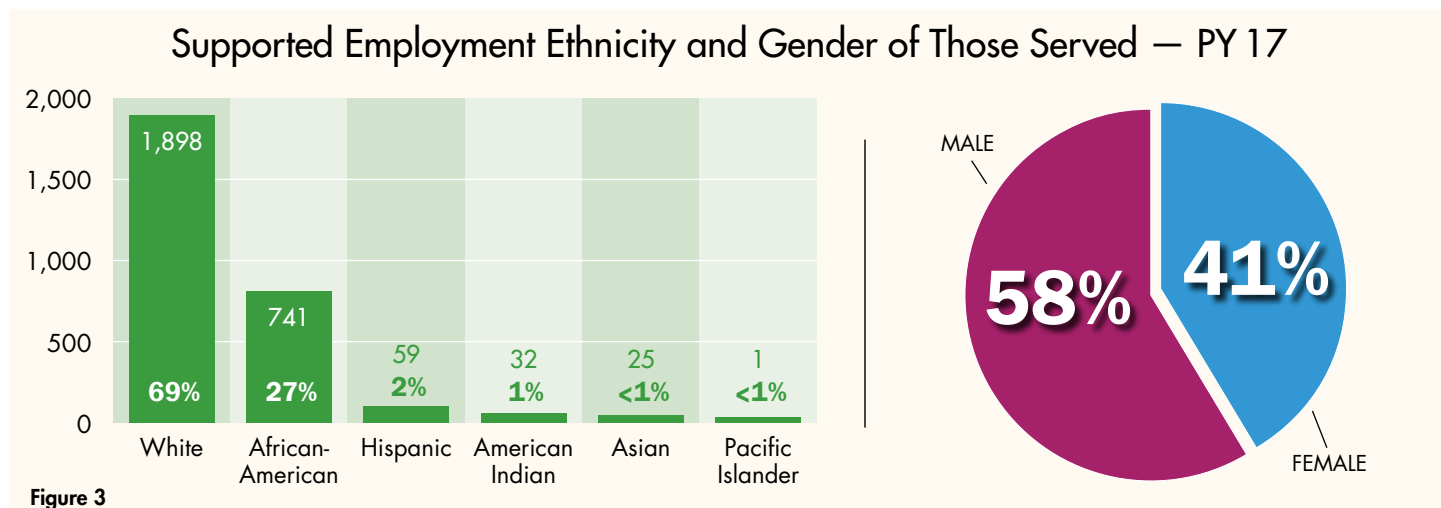
Figure 2

Supported Employment

VR provides supported employment (SE) services to a diverse population as indicated by Figures 2-3 (pages 15-16). Some of these services are jointly provided by DBH-DD. SE is defined as competitive work in an integrated work setting with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. During PY 2017, 55.4 percent of individuals who received SE services and exited the program were successfully employed.

In PY 2017, VR worked with 113 CRPs that provide SE services and cover all counties in Missouri. An outcome-based model of SE services is used that features a period of discovery and exploration with the individual to develop vocational direction and community-based job exploration. Outcomes include job placement, 30 days of independent employment and 90 days of employment. In addition to these milestones, on-the-job and off-site supports may also be authorized.

VR places an emphasis on the development of natural support systems to help individuals participating in supported employment successfully remain in the workforce. These natural supports help to reduce the cost of providing SE services. Figure 4 (page 16) shows the average cost of services, hourly wages and other statistics for supported employment.



Note: Less than 1 percent did not wish to self-identify gender, and less than 1 percent did not answer.

Other Supported Employment Statistics — PY 17

Average cost of supported employment services per person	\$2,177
Average hourly wage per person	\$9.06
Average hours per week worked per person	24
Success rate	55.4%
Successful outcomes	1,527
Total participants	2,756

Age	Number	Percentage
Less than 25 years	945	34%
25 through 34	666	24%
35 through 44	488	18%
45 through 54	389	14%
55 through 64	235	9%
65 and over	33	1%
TOTAL	2,756	100%

Figure 4

Note: All information in figures 2-4 applies to SE services only. Statistics are based on the number of individuals who exited the program either successfully or unsuccessfully after receiving SE services.

Rehabilitation Technology

In PY 2017, VR provided a variety of rehabilitation technology services, assistive devices and equipment to 975 individuals who received services and exited the program for a total cost of \$6,584,761. VR purchases assistive devices to help with increasing, maintaining or improving functional capabilities. Devices could include hearing aids and other personal listening and communication devices, vehicle and home modifications, wheelchairs, and other powered mobility equipment. Rehabilitation technology services include consultation, evaluation, design, customization, adaptation, maintenance, repair, therapy and technical training.

VR and Missouri Assistive Technology (MoAT) have collaborated to develop a cooperative agreement to ensure the maximum statewide utilization of services. The agreement provides a plan for service coordination; for using resources to the best advantage; for information sharing, technical support and training; to facilitate the referral of potentially eligible individuals between agencies; and to help eligible people obtain rehabilitation technology services. A VR staff member is a representative on the MoAT Advisory Council.

Several VR counselors have specialized caseloads in the area of rehabilitation technology. Located throughout Missouri are seven VR counselors and one assistant director who are skilled in manual communication for the deaf and hard of hearing. Also, designated hard of hearing specialists in the Kansas City area are acquiring additional education on hearing aids and rehabilitation technology for individuals with hearing loss.

VR utilizes assistive technology demonstration sites located at CILs across the state for exploring, reviewing and demonstrating various devices, services and resources that are available to individuals with alternative communication needs. VR counselors are allowed to borrow rehabilitation technology equipment from MoAT for individuals to test before purchase.

In April, MoAT presented the Power Up 2018 Assistive Technology Conference and Expo. The conference was open to service providers, consumers, independent living specialists, VR staff and other professionals in the rehabilitation field. Seventeen VR staff members attended the event. The conference was successful in providing an opportunity to view state-of-the-art technology and equipment designed to enhance and promote independence and quality of life.



Karen Funkenbusch (left photo) from the AgrAbility Project at MU Extension presented in September at VR's Down on the Farm day training for staff. This event provided an opportunity to learn about the culture of farming and the latest agricultural technology for individuals with disabilities. **Deb Fannon** (right photo), VR assistant district supervisor, tried out a lift that helps farmers with disabilities get into agricultural equipment and machinery.

SUCCESS STORIES

Caitlin Bartley won't let anything

slow her down – not negativity, and definitely not congenital muscular dystrophy.

"I'm not my disability," she said. "It's something I have, but it's not who I am. I'm all about living the most-positive life that I can. (This disease) is just part of it."

A native of Mokane, Caitlin was referred to VR by the special education department at South Callaway High School during her sophomore year. Caitlin's VR counselor, Carol Smith, worked with her from then through Caitlin's undergraduate years at Lincoln University in Jefferson City. Financial assistance provided by VR helped pay for Caitlin's education and allowed her to live on campus.

"I wanted to live in a dorm just like most college students do and experience the independent college life," she said. "VR totally supported me in this."

After graduating in 2015 from Lincoln with bachelor's degrees in both social work and psychology, Caitlin went on to complete a master's degree in social work from the University of Missouri. VR again contributed financially for her master's program.

"(VR) made getting a master's degree possible," she said. "I wouldn't be where I'm at today without them."

In August 2017, Caitlin began working at her current job with the Division of Developmental Disabilities, part of the Missouri Department of Mental Health. As state coordinator for the National Core Indicators (NCI) project, Caitlin trains surveyors, provides technical assistance, ensures surveys are administered in accordance with NCI guidelines and analyzes results in order to make recommendations to the division. NCI is a voluntary initiative that public developmental disabilities agencies participate in to measure their own performance. Caitlin said she views her job as being an "advocate from an evidence-based standard."

"As it's a national project, we can compare how we are doing with other states and the nation as a whole," she said.

As a person who relies on a motorized wheelchair and a ventilator, Caitlin said she sometimes encounters people who make assumptions based on what they initially observe.

"If they stop and pay attention, I can show them what I can do," she said. "There's a lot of stuff physically that I can't do, but there's even more that I can do. Stay open-minded, and give me a chance to show what I'm capable of." ■



Caitlin Bartley

SUCCESS STORIES



Nathan Lara

Many students might balk if a teacher deliberately tried to sabotage

their work, but Nathan Lara said he didn't especially mind. After all, it was part of the training he received that allowed him to become a professional computer technician.

"It was stressful, I'll give them that," he said. "But, it was one of those things you had to do."

While attending training at Centriq in the Kansas City area, Nathan and his classmates built complex computer networks, and then their teachers went in and caused havoc to see if their students could fix network issues that might pop up on the job. Even with the challenge, Nathan said he appreciated that his instructors were "there 100 percent with the classes they're teaching."

"There were a couple of days I was behind, and they immediately helped me catch up," he said.

Nathan was referred to VR while a student at Blue Springs High School. He has a learning disability that leads to difficulty with written expression.

"If I'm typing things out, I'm slowing down, and my thoughts can get mixed up," he said. "My brain just wants to flow all of the information out as if I'm talking on paper."

Karen Dean, Nathan's VR counselor, met him in 2017 during his senior year of high school. As Nathan has been knowledgeable and talented with computers since his grade-school years, they looked at some four-year college programs related to the field. Ultimately, Nathan decided on the fast-track Centriq program because it would get him into the workforce that much quicker. VR provided financial assistance to help pay for the program.

Since completing the Centriq training, Nathan has worked for Unite Private Networks and CenturyLink. While the idea of trying out different jobs under the IT umbrella is appealing to him, long-term he wants to keep his focus on a career that helps people with their computer problems directly – especially people who are not particularly tech-savvy.

"I'm very happy and very excited about where I'm at right now," he said. ■

SUCCESS STORIES



Sometimes the clichés are true – if at first you don’t succeed, try, try again. Jim Keneipp’s story is proof of the power of perseverance.

“I am surprised at how well I can get past my disability at work and perform my duties as normal,” he said. “At first, I thought I would have trouble getting myself out of bed every day. But, knowing that the work I do actually makes a difference makes this so much easier now.”

Starla Starke, a VR counselor, started working on Jim’s case in December 2014. Jim had been on disability and was diagnosed with major depressive disorder, which made it difficult for him to stay employed. He had received a bachelor’s degree in the 1990s and had worked in computing, but his skills in his chosen field were out of date.

Jim also had been through a couple of false starts with VR in the past. This time, he and Starla determined that an associate degree in computer information systems at Columbia College would give him the best chance for success. VR paid for Jim’s tuition and books, something he assumed would not be an option during his previous interactions with VR.

“Don’t be afraid to ask for what you really want up front,” he said.

Jim completed his degree in two years and currently works for the state of Missouri in Jefferson City as an information technologist. He does Web programming for the Department of Revenue and likes the challenges that come with it.

“I enjoy using my logical skills to track down the cause of a problem, as well as the satisfaction of being able to fix that problem and see it working again,” he said.

A bicyclist and hiker who recently visited Yellowstone National Park (see photo above), Jim also plays keyboard in two local cover bands. Starla said she often brings his name up to others as someone who benefited greatly from the rehabilitation counseling and financial support provided by VR.

“I’m just extremely proud of him,” she said. ■

SATISFACTION SURVEY

Satisfaction with staff and services is a VR priority, and the SRC's Program Evaluation Committee continues to work with VR on reviewing and analyzing feedback from individuals who receive VR services. This feedback is shared with management, supervisors and counselors and is used as a tool to improve services, evaluate staff performance and determine training needs.

During PY 2017, survey letters and postage-paid envelopes were mailed to a random sample of 9,893 individuals at various stages in the rehabilitation process (with a response rate of 12 percent). Survey feedback was positive. Results showed that 98 percent of those surveyed felt they were treated with respect, 96 percent felt that staff was available when needed and 94 percent felt their counselor explained their choices. The overall results are listed on page 22.

PY 2017 Survey Comments

"VR helped me find *a purpose in life* and *have confidence in myself*."

"My counselor was *the only positive reinforcement* I had to keep pushing forward with my education."

"This is the best program! *it changed my life*."

"My counselor made sure I had *support and training* I needed to get a job."

"Without *my counselor's consistent and persistent follow-up calls and letters*, I would have given up on myself and fallen through the cracks."

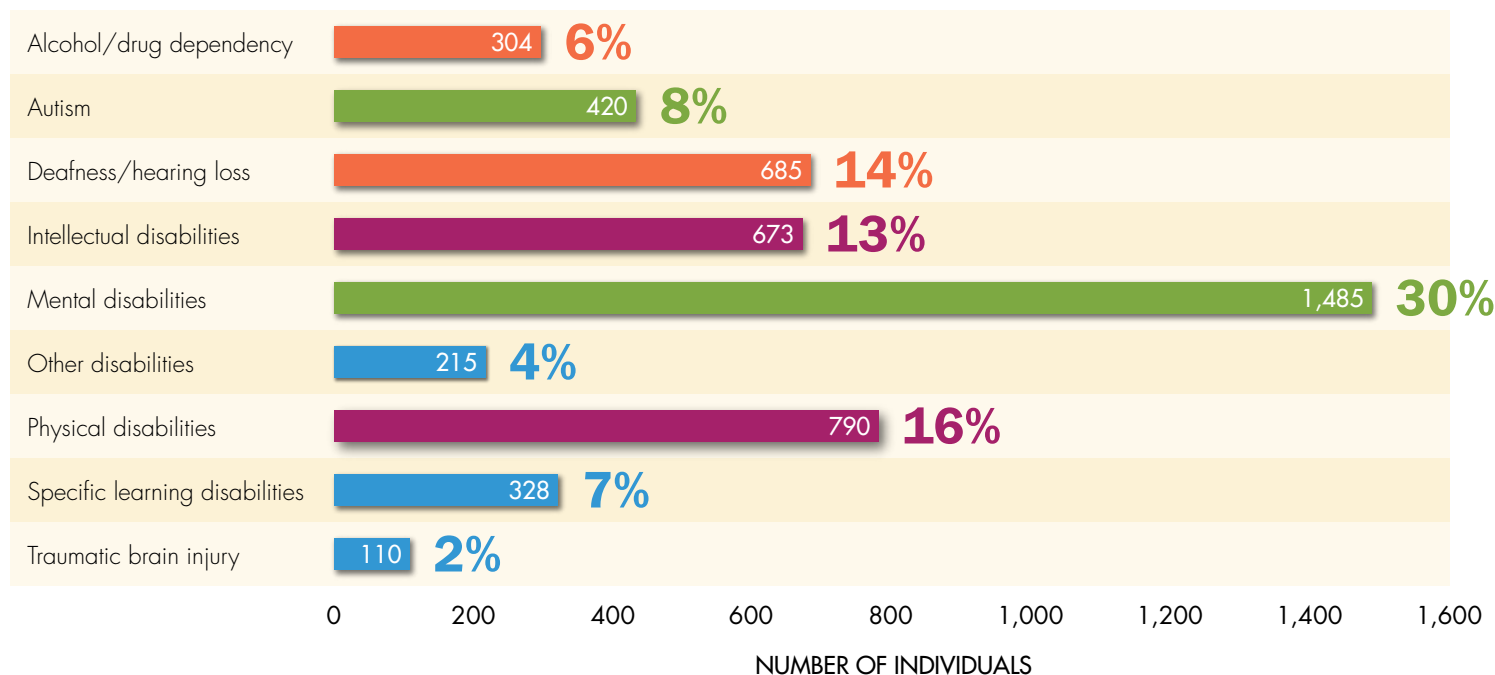
"VR has helped me *regain my self-confidence, faith and determination* to continue pursuing my set goals."

Survey Results (Specific group responses during PY 17)	Total responses received	Staff was available		Staff treated me with respect		I knew purpose of VR services		Counselor helped plan services		Counselor explained choices	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Total responses	1,106	96%	4%	98%	2%	96%	4%	92%	8%	94%	6%
Open cases	510	97%	3%	99%	1%	95%	5%	95%	5%	95%	5%
Successful outcomes	421	98%	2%	99%	1%	98%	2%	95%	5%	96%	4%
Unsuccessful outcomes; closed before services	55	87%	13%	93%	7%	83%	17%	60%	40%	76%	24%
Unsuccessful outcomes; closed after services	120	92%	8%	96%	4%	97%	3%	82%	18%	88%	12%
Supported employment individuals	263	95%	5%	97%	3%	97%	3%	94%	6%	94%	6%
Individuals under 25 at application	332	97%	3%	98%	2%	95%	5%	92%	8%	93%	7%
Individuals with autism	87	98%	2%	98%	2%	99%	1%	96%	4%	96%	4%
Individuals with deafness/hearing loss	159	97%	3%	100%	0%	95%	5%	92%	8%	94%	6%
Individuals with mental disabilities	315	94%	6%	98%	2%	95%	5%	90%	10%	92%	8%
Individuals with physical disabilities	191	96%	4%	98%	2%	96%	4%	94%	6%	96%	4%
Individuals with traumatic brain injury	31	97%	3%	97%	3%	90%	10%	90%	10%	93%	7%
Individuals with other disabilities	224	99%	1%	100%	0%	95%	5%	93%	7%	96%	4%

PROGRAM DATA

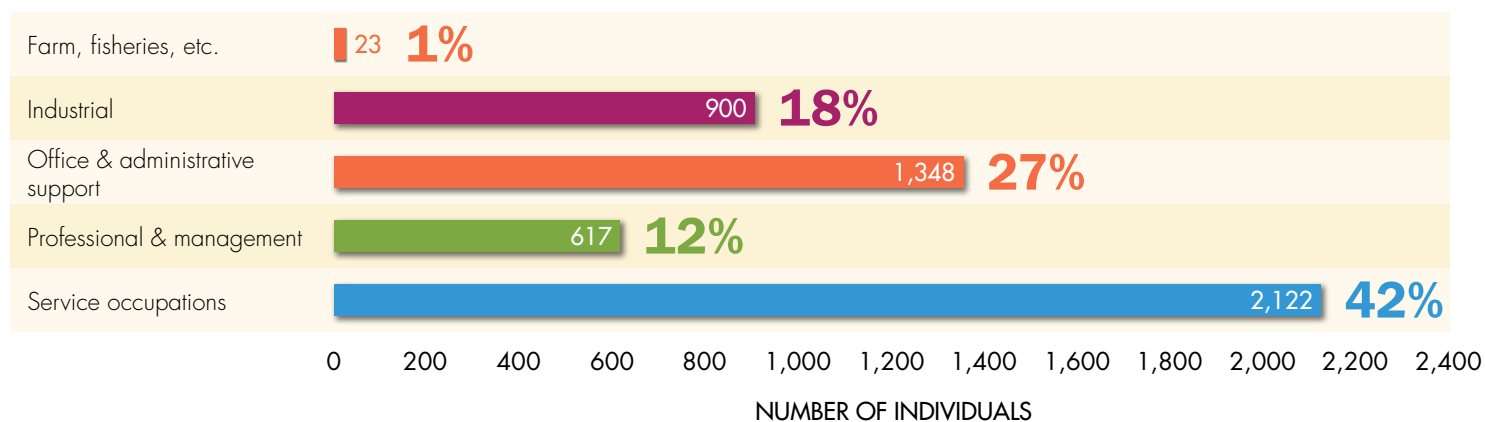
Disability Categories — 5,010 individuals with successful employment outcomes (PY 17)

TYPE OF DISABILITY

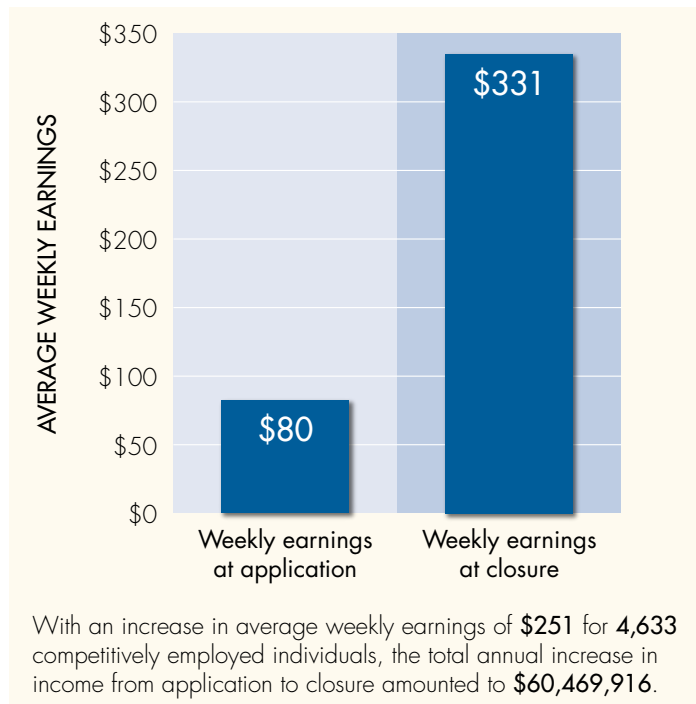


Occupations — 5,010 individuals with successful employment outcomes (PY 17)

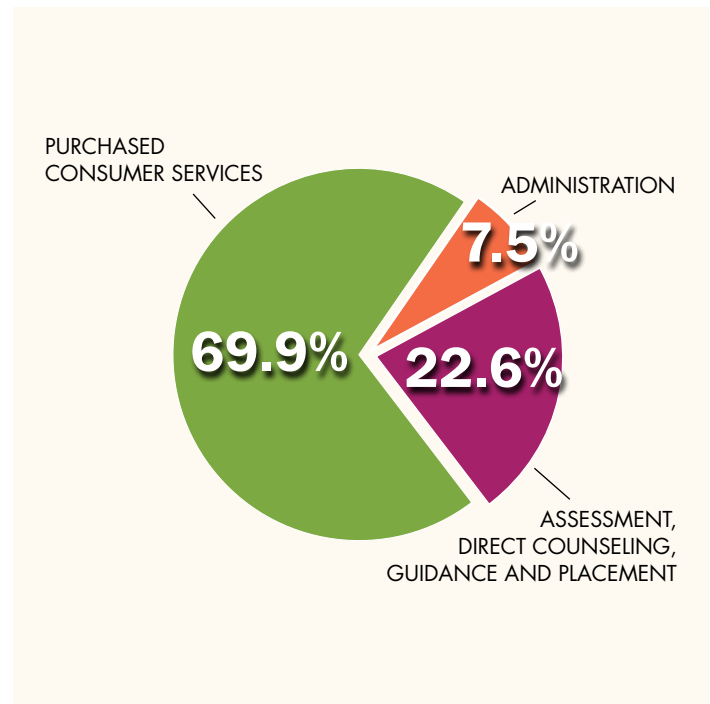
OCCUPATION



Impact of VR Services — PY 17



Expenditures — PY 17



Characteristics — Individuals with successful employment outcomes (PY 17)

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	2,841	56%
Female	2,158	43%
Did not wish to self-identify	9	<1%
Did not answer	2	<1%
TOTAL	5,010	100%

Ethnicity	Number	Percentage
White	3,773	75%
African-American	1,022	20%
Hispanic	110	2%
American Indian	63	1%
Asian	34	1%
Pacific Islander	8	<1%
TOTAL	5,010	100%

Age	Number	Percentage
Less than 25 years	1,621	32%
25 through 34	973	19%
35 through 44	781	16%
45 through 54	736	15%
55 through 64	647	13%
65 and over	252	5%
TOTAL	5,010	100%

VR OFFICES

1) CAPE GIRARDEAU VR

3102 Blattner Drive, Suite 103
Cape Girardeau, MO 63703-6326
Toll-free: 877-702-9883

2) CENTRAL OFFICE VR

3024 Dupont Circle
Jefferson City, MO 65109-6188
Toll-free: 877-222-8963

3) CHILLICOTHE VR

603 W. Mohawk Road
Chillicothe, MO 64601-3919
Toll-free: 866-572-4049

4) COLUMBIA VR

900 W. Nifong Blvd., Suite 210
Columbia, MO 65203-4469
Toll-free: 877-222-8961

5) FARMINGTON VR

901 Progress Drive, Suite 100
Farmington, MO 63640-9108
Toll-free: 800-640-7110

6) HANNIBAL VR

112 Jaycee Drive
Hannibal, MO 63401-3673
Toll-free: 877-222-8960

7) JEFFERSON CITY VR

1500 Southridge Drive,
Suite 200
Jefferson City, MO 65109-5710
Toll-free: 866-661-9106

8) JOPLIN VR

801 E. 15th St., Suite B
Joplin, MO 64804-0804
Toll-free: 877-222-8964

9) KANSAS CITY DOWNTOWN VR

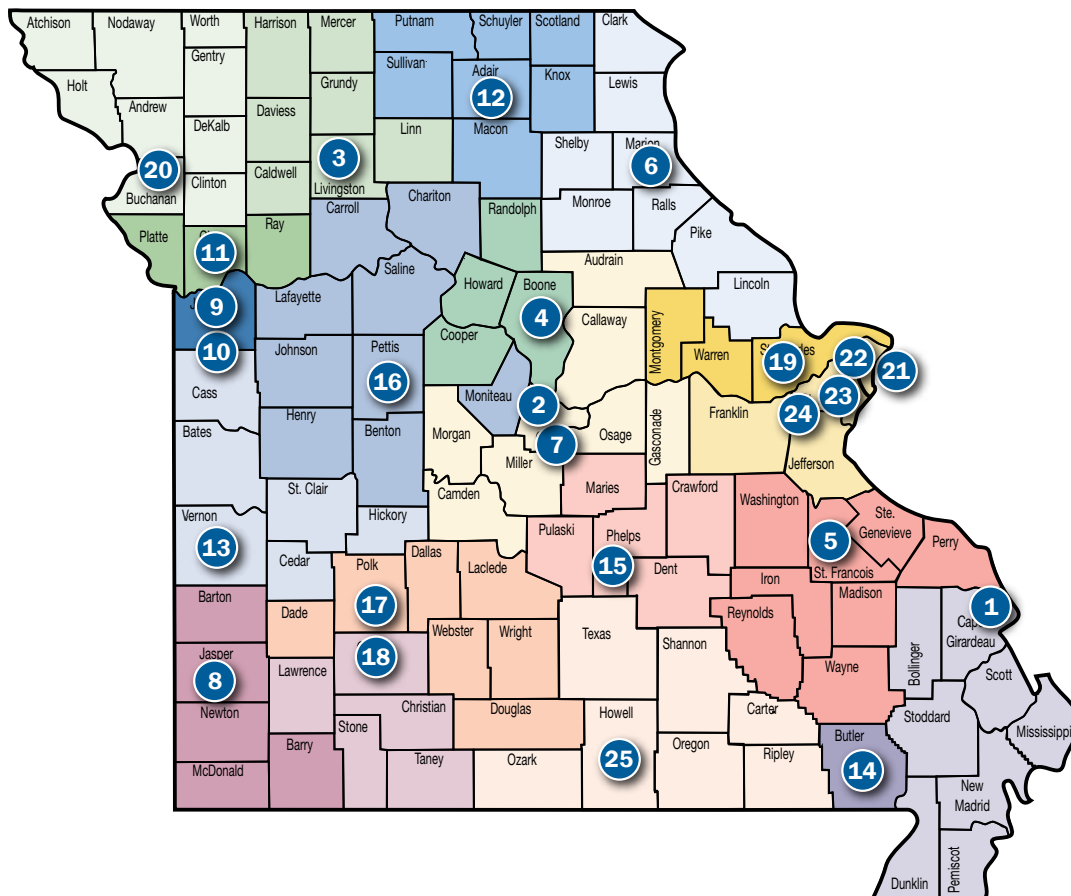
615 E. 13th St., Suite G-3
Kansas City, MO 64106-2856
Toll-free: 866-971-8568

10) KANSAS CITY EAST/ TRANSITION VR

Joseph P. Teasdale State
Office Building
8800 E. 63rd St., Suite 260
Raytown, MO 64133-4957
Toll-free: 866-831-1363

11) KANSAS CITY NORTH VR

8030 N. Oak Trafficway
Kansas City, MO 64118-1209
Toll-free: 877-270-0198



12) KIRKSVILLE VR

1612 N. Osteopathy, Suite B
Kirksville, MO 63501-2759
Toll-free: 877-222-8962

13) NEVADA VR

621 E. Highland Ave., Suite 2
Nevada, MO 64772-1088
Toll-free: 800-598-3471

14) POPLAR BLUFF VR

1903 Northwood Drive, Suite 3
Poplar Bluff, MO 63901-2400
Toll-free: 800-281-9894

15) ROLLA VR

1101A Kingshighway St.
Rolla, MO 65401-2922
Toll-free: 800-890-2867

16) SEDALIA VR

2115 W. Broadway Blvd.
Sedalia, MO 65301-2506
Toll-free: 800-924-0419

17) SPRINGFIELD NORTH VR

613 E. Kearney St.
Springfield, MO 65803-3425
Toll-free: 877-222-8965

18) SPRINGFIELD SOUTH VR

1735 W. Catalpa St., Suite C
Springfield, MO 65807-1243
Toll-free: 877-222-8967

19) ST. CHARLES VR

3737 Harry S. Truman Blvd.,
Suite 400
St. Charles, MO 63301-4096
Toll-free: 855-283-2681

20) ST. JOSEPH VR

State Office Building
525 Jules St., Room 201
St. Joseph, MO 64501-1900
Toll-free: 877-702-9876

21) ST. LOUIS DOWNTOWN VR

220 S. Jefferson Ave., Suite 110
St. Louis, MO 63103-2536
Toll-free: 866-971-8569

22) ST. LOUIS NORTH VR

4040 Seven Hills Drive,
Suite 257
Florissant, MO 63033-6767
Phone: 314-475-7999

23) ST. LOUIS SOUTH VR

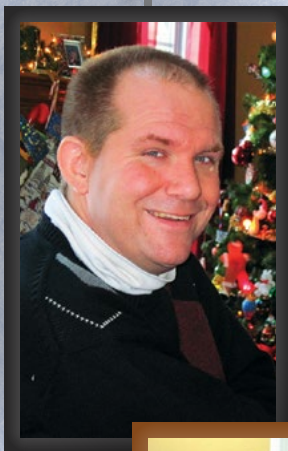
3256 Laclede Station Road,
Suite 103
St. Louis, MO 63143-3753
Toll-free: 877-222-8968

24) ST. LOUIS WEST/ TRANSITION VR

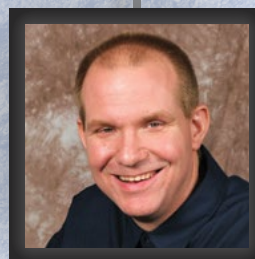
9900 Page Ave., Suite 104
St. Louis, MO 63132-1438
Phone: 314-587-4877

25) WEST PLAINS VR

3417 Division Drive, Suite 2
West Plains, MO 65775-5900
Toll-free: 877-222-8959



This annual report is dedicated to our friend and fellow council member **Brent Yerian**, who passed away on September 29, 2018.



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The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program is funded, in part, with a federal grant awarded by the Department of Education. In FFY 2018, the program received \$60,512,747 of federal funds and \$16,377,656 of state funds for VR services. Total funding of \$76,890,403 was comprised of 78.7% federal monies and 21.3% of state matching funds. The Supported Employment (SE) program is funded, in part, with a federal grant awarded by the Department of Education. In FFY 2018, the program received \$277,246 of federal funds and \$14,592 of state funds for SE services. Total funding of \$291,838 was comprised of 95% federal monies and 5% state matching funds. The Independent Living (IL) program is funded, in part, with a federal grant awarded by the Department of Health and Human Services. In FFY 2018, the program received \$332,044 of federal funds and \$36,894 of state funds for IL services. Total funding of \$368,938 was comprised of 90% federal monies and 10% state matching funds. In FFY 2018, the IL program received additional state funding for an overall total of \$2,743,102.